

later time at Athens, offered reminders of primitive barbarism and of the immolation of human beings, and a representation of savage nudity, but they presented no image which was ridiculous or base. Tragedy had a long struggle to become separate from lyric forms, but ^Eschylus at last accomplished the separation. This was really the separation of the high literary drama from the popular *mimus*. After ten centuries of glory in Greece tragedy was lost again under the lyric form.¹ The popular drama, however, lasted on until to-day, and it has never changed its characteristic elements.

630. The *mimus*. The essence of the *mimus* is in pantomime as the name denotes. It imitates facts of life and behavior and is, therefore, essentially realistic. It may well be derived from the mimetic dances of nature peoples, in which beasts, warriors, and lovers are imitated, with jest and satirical exaggeration of characteristic traits. In the folk drama in its simplest forms nothing has ever been written. The actor assumed a role and improvised all which he had to say in trying to act it out. His responsibility for the rdle was far greater than that of an actor in a culture drama. The actor, by repeating a role, produced a representation of it which was personal to himself and which he perfected. The most interesting and marked characters became fixed. A large number of them are now established in literature and have become known all over the world. The latest instance of such a type is, perhaps, Lord Dundreary. The word *mimus* appears in Greece in the fifth century B.C. The *mimttis* was a picture of life or, more exactly, an unwritten parody of life. It was divided into grades and the actors into castes. Women had

previously appeared as jugglers and mountebanks. They now appeared amongst the actors of the popular drama. This made the exhibitions questionable according to Greek standards. The exhibitions were given by wandering companies. While actors of the culture drama always wore masks, those of the *mimits* were the first to appear unmasked ;² later others imitated them. At the present day the theatrical exhibitions which may be seen on the outskirts of a fair in central Europe well represent the ancient *mimus*.

¹ Magnin, *Origines*^ 33, 38-40. ² Reich, *Der Mimus*, 527.